New Canaan Public Schools  
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For Immediate Release:

Saxe Middle School Band Concert program  
Features original composition by sixth grader Timothy Orelup

New Canaan, CT (May 9, 2019). When the fifth and sixth grade Saxe Middle School Band performs its Spring Concert later this month, one of the pieces on the program will be an original composition written by one of its own. Saxe sixth grader Timothy Orelup, who plays trumpet, has written a musical composition entitled “Prisoners of Davy Jones,” that will have its world premiere performance at the concert, which takes place at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 22, 2019, at the Saxe Middle School auditorium.

“In all my 30-plus years of teaching, I have never had a student who could compose at his level,” said Saxe music teacher Janet Rosen. “In January, Timmy showed me a piece he had written. I listened to it and was amazed by its compositional techniques and catchy tune. I told him it was good enough to be played by a band and suggested we perform it in our Spring Concert.”

To do this, the sixth grader would need to write out parts for each individual instrument, although he hadn’t had any prior experience with orchestration or music arrangements. “I gave Timmy the program from our Winter Band Concert and told him to look at the instruments listed in our band roster to see which instruments we had in our band,” said Mrs. Rosen. “He brought it home, and together with his Mom, they looked up the ranges of the instruments, and he began assigning melodies and harmonies to the different instruments.”

Timmy had originally called his composition “Haunted House,” but because the Spring Concert has a pirate theme, his revised work became “Prisoners of Davy Jones.”

“We talked about the ranges of the instruments and what ranges and notes are playable by middle school band level kids,” said Mrs. Rosen, who teaches grades 5-8 instrumental music at Saxe and has been teaching in the district for the past 13 years. “He tweaked the parts and added some very cool percussion sounds, like chains and a thunder sheet, which are quite unusual. It shows what a creative mind he has.”

Timmy Orelup says he has always been interested in music and credits learning about music composition from online videos and getting tips from his parents, who both played instruments in college. “This song was mostly written in the span of only one day using the free software Musescore,” he explained. “I showed the piece to Mrs. Rosen, and she liked the song. From there, she and I worked together to make the song the best it could be, and believe me, if it wasn’t for her helpful guidance, it wouldn’t be the same song it is today.”
The sixth grader’s musical inspirations include Toby Fox, Laura Shigihara, Sim Gretina, Shady Cicada, and Kristofer Maddigan. “I want to thank all of the Saxe band teachers, Mrs. Rosen, Mr. Kibbey, and Mr. Coulter, for their help and encouragement,” he said. “I hope I get a chance to arrange or compose more pieces for the seventh grade band next year.”

Timothy Orelup’s composition and sheet music are posted online: click here.

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